

JAIME HERRERA BEUTLER
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March 5, 2021

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary, U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

I write to offer my full support of the Port of Longview's application for a U.S. Department of Transportation investment of \$16,000,000 to fund construction of its Industrial Rail Corridor Expansion project (IRCE), which will dramatically improve the Port's last mile rail connection. Completion of IRCE could provide critical support to economic growth and pandemic-related recovery efforts for my constituents in Cowlitz County, Washington, an historically disadvantaged rural community in my district.

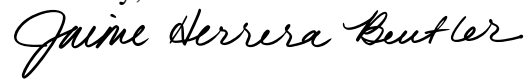
The IRCE will build on an original two-track link the Port constructed in 2005 to provide its marine terminals with direct access to Class I mainline rail for the first time. While the Port, its community and the region have greatly benefited from the success of this original connection, the Port believes that current needs and growing demand requires that the corridor expand to address congestion challenges and capacity constraints.

The Port's strategic connections to the Columbia River, the Interstate System, and mainline rail provides a unique gateway for commodities coming from or seeking to reach overseas markets. Despite an abundance of demand for growth in U.S. exports at deep-draft ports in the Pacific Northwest, limited rail access and capacity constraints severely limits opportunities at the Port's marine terminals that are ripe with economic potential. The Port has spent years planning for the IRCE to solve this problem and believes that a federal investment will provide the last remaining resources to make it a reality.

The Port has repeatedly shown itself as a steadfast partner and demonstrates itself as a reliable steward of public funds that has driven economic development for its community for decades.

Once again, I am proud to offer my full support of a federal investment into the IRCE and urge your full consideration of the Port of Longview's application.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jaime Herrera Beutler". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jaime" being the most prominent.

Jaime Herrera Beutler
Member of Congress